Mr. Blackstone received much applause for his suggestion; and Mr. Bowieknife, of Texas, who succeeded him, said, "I so fully agree with the gentleman from Philadelphia in his love for the sex, and in all the sentiments he has advanced, that I will only add, should the measure he has recommended fail to make peace, I hope all the ladies will come to Texas. We have hearts and arms for all of them.

'If all other States reject 'em,
Ours will freely, *gladly* take 'em.' "

Mr. Placer, from California, remarked, "That he was for no half-way measures. It was his opinion that all the women ought to be seized and sent to California; it was a new country, and the miners wanted wives. When they were once there, he thought they could be managed. Judge Lynch was an active man. Show them that there was only the difference of a letter between altar and halter, and, if they would not marry, why let them hang!"

Mr. H. P. Husband said, "He had listened with astonishment to the proceedings of the day. He really thought that, for all the good that had been done or suggested, gentlemen might as well have staid at home. He had a few words still to offer on the subject, which he hoped they would hear with patience. Among other things, he had prepared a list of all the bad women who had ever existed."

Here Mr. Wumenheyter remarked, "That he must remind the gentleman time was precious; and, as all women who had ever existed were bad, Mr. Husband had better mention only the worst of them, among whom he must not forget his (Mr. W.'s) three wives."

Mr. Husband was so disconcerted at this interruption, that he forgot what he had to say, and could only remember that his list begun with Eve, and ended with the present generation.

"I see clearly, gentlemen," continued he, "that no one enters so warmly into this subject as myself. Well, be it so. I am ready to fall a martyr in such a cause; and I here solemnly declare that no obstacle shall induce me to swerve from the path that duty marks out for me to follow. I will make every endeavor to extirpate this vile heresy among the women. I will immolate myself on the altar of my country. I will sacrifice my domestic affections on its shrine—Mrs. Husband herself"——

"Here I am, my dear!" said a sharp voice, and a small, thin, vinegar-faced lady entered the room, and walked up to the platform, at the head of a numerous procession of females. "My love," continued she, "it is late; I am afraid you will take cold. Hadn't you better come home?"

"If you think so, my dear, certainly," replied Mr. Husband, turning pale, and trembling so he could scarcely stand, perceiving which, his wife affectionately offered him her arm.

Mr. Easyled meekly obeyed an imperative gesture from Mrs. Easyled, and Mrs. Bluster picked up the general, who had fainted, and carried him out in her arms.

Exeunt omnes, in wild confusion.

FLORENCE SEFTON; OR, THE BORDER WARFARE.

BY MISS B. GARTLAND.

(Continued from page 201.)

CHAPTER IV.

In the meanwhile, Howell and his volunteers had reached Detroit and were led with the rest of the army into Canada, where, as the reader knows, they remained, doing nothing, for a month, and then returned to Detroit, much to the dissatisfaction of the men. Howell was now sent with dispatches from General Hull to General Van Rensselaer. The news that General Brock had joined the British at Malden, and that they were *now* on their way to attack the army under Hull, had reached him, and he had besought that General to send another messenger with the dispatches, and not deprive him of the opportunity of "fleshing his maiden sword;" but his request had met with a decided refusal. It appeared to Howell as if his superior officer wished to be rid of him, and for what reason he could not conjecture. Serjeant Lazy O'Lear (for that worthy had joined General Van Rensselaer's division) had only arrived at Detroit a few hours previously with a communication from his commander, and, instead of returning with the answer, was detained by Hull under a pretext "that his services were needed on some service, which his knowledge of the localities of the country for miles round, on each border, rendered of importance;" and Howell was made the envoy, with Gotlieb Pretz as an attendant, whom the reader will recollect we left in our first chapter sitting in the boat meditating on the folly of falling in love. We will still leave him there, and follow Howell in his walk along the river's bank, which he pursued alone, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter thoughts." He had seen General Van Rensselaer and delivered his letters; he had observed (as he was requested to remain in the room) the brow of that General contract and grow dark, as he perused them. When he had concluded, he threw them on the table; then rising,

paced the room up and down for a few moments; then stopping abruptly before Howell, he said, "General Hull has two thousand men, I believe, at Fort Detroit?"

"Two thousand five hundred, sir!" replied Howell.

"And the British are bringing against him?"

"About half that number. And there is no doubt we will have a glorious victory. I only hope, sir, I may return in time to partake of it," said Howell.

The general surveyed the noble form, the handsome face, and the dark, flashing eyes lighted up by enthusiasm, of the young soldier, and smiled; but smiled sadly.

"I fear you will be disappointed, Captain Meredith; for I have cause to think that General Hull is"—and here he lowered his voice almost to a whisper, and the words came through his teeth with a hissing sound—"is a *coward*, if not a *traitor!*"

Howell started, and almost involuntarily laid his hand on his sword.

"This is the second time," continued the general, not noticing his emotion, "that he has written to me to forward his dispatches to Major General Dearborn for more men, thinking one thousand could be spared from *this post*; concluding, I suppose, that, were the enemy to attack us here, even with the remainder we would have the courage—which he seems to lack—to defend ourselves like men. But you are fatigued, Captain Meredith; seek some repose. You cannot return to Detroit until I hear from head-quarters. I expect your friend, Lieutenant Sefton, hourly from there."

Howell bowed, and withdrew. What the general had said had opened his eyes to much he thought singular in the conduct of Hull. He was like one awakened from sleep, and wondered at his own stupidity in not discovering that cowardice, if not treason, held sway at Fort Detroit.

He did not retire; but, calling Gotlieb, entered his boat and rowed a couple of miles up, with the intention of visiting Sefton Hill. He had not seen Florence since they had parted in New York, nearly four months before. It had appeared to him as so many ages. He walked rapidly along, but paused a few moments when he neared the place they had crossed from on their last pic-nic, and thought of the many changes that had taken place since. The wounded Indian rose before him; then their departure for New York, his own travels, the death of Mrs. Sefton, and the coolness which now existed between the colonel and his father. His uncertain prospects of being soon united to her he loved so deeply, and the dangers to which she would, he feared, be exposed, residing, as it were, in the very seat of war, were uppermost in his mind.

Such were the thoughts that filled the breast of Howell Meredith as he entered the long, winding avenue that led to the colonel's mansion. He observed, as he approached, that the lower windows were closed. He ascended the steps and rang the bell. In a few moments, the door was opened by a servant in livery; and, on his inquiring if Miss Sefton was at home, Mrs. Jones, who had been housekeeper there for years, and who was crossing the hall, stopped, and, as Howell came forward, exclaimed—

"Bless my soul, it is indeed Master Howell!" and the good woman pressed forward, extending both her hands to him. "I knew I could not be mistaken in that voice," said she, shaking his hand warmly. "And you look so well," she continued; "only a little sunburnt. And I should have known those dark eyes and short brown curls anywhere, Master Howell."

"And I should have known that good-natured, kind face of yours anywhere, Mrs. Jones," he replied; "and am happy to see that time has made no change in it."

"Well, I see you have not forgotten how to flatter yet, Master Howell," she replied. "But walk in the drawing-room, and I will tell Miss Florence that you are here."

Howell entered the splendidly furnished room. We have before observed the night was cool and damp, and a comfortable fire of hickory wood was burning on the large, bright andirons on the hearth; the furniture covered with rich crimson velvet, the massive mirrors, and curtains of yellow and crimson damask that hung in rich folds down to the gorgeously wrought carpets, from which no footfall could be heard, and the masterpieces of painting and sculpture which adorned the walls—these had been familiar to Howell, and he thought not of them. His thoughts were of the fair being who, in the midst of all this splendor and luxury, might, at no distant time, be in danger of the savage's tomahawk, and of the temerity of that father, who obstinately persisted in remaining there, and of having Florence with him, when she, at least, would be in far greater security in New York, under the protection of his parents. But Howell knew not then the motives that prompted Colonel Sefton to act thus, nor the reasons he had for thinking they were perfectly secure in remaining at Sefton Hill.

He stood thus musing for a short time, when, hearing the flutter of a dress, he turned, and in an instant Florence was clasped to his heart. "Florence!" "Howell!" was all their full hearts could say. After their first emotions of joy at again meeting were somewhat subsided, Howell inquired after the colonel and Miss Aylmer.

"Mary had retired early, in consequence of a severe headache; and my father," continued Florence, "is in the library, where he now spends much of his time in writing, and does not often like to be disturbed. Oh, Howell, I much fear there is something wrong, particularly when I see that dreadful man closeted with him for hours!"

"What 'dreadful man' can you possibly mean, dearest? I do not understand."

"Lazy O'Lear," replied she. "Do not smile, as if you thought the insignificance of the man would prevent his doing mischief. I believe he has art and cunning enough to outwit those who imagine they are making a tool of him to gain their own ends."

"But of what are you fearful, dear Florence, or what is it you think is wrong? You do not suppose your father could possibly be connected with anything dishonorable, and employ this vile man to assist him?"

"Oh no, no! I did not mean that," said poor Florence. "But you know, Howell, papa is an Englishman, and he views things through the medium of prejudice, and not as we do; and I fear this O'Lear is a traitor, and that he is trying to work on those prejudices, or I should rather say that he is employed by others in high station to work on them, by bringing letters to papa, urging him to join the British. Some nights since, before he left for Detroit, he was here until past midnight, when I am sure Van Rensselaer thought he was on his way to that place. I am apprehensive of some plot, which will be discovered, and my father's life forfeited. But he must be saved, Howell!" she continued, clasping her hands passionately, and bursting into a flood of tears—"he must be saved!"

"Listen to me, Florence, my own Florence!" said Howell, as he passed his arm round her waist and drew her closer to him; for a new light seemed to burst on his mind. "You cannot remain here long in safety. Would to Heaven I could this moment ask this dear hand of your father! But that cannot be. I return perhaps this very night, or, at farthest, on to-morrow, to the fort. We are on the eve of a battle; and, should Henry not arrive from headquarters by then, no consideration shall detain me from my post, and General Van Rensselaer must find another messenger. We are *sure*, in the position we are placed, of a decisive victory. Even were the force the English bring against us double the number it is, victory is certain, if cowardice or treachery do not prevail. I will then procure leave of absence for a few weeks, and return here immediately to ask your father's consent to our union, and will then conduct you and Miss Aylmer to New York, where I will have to leave you, dearest," he added, pressing his lips to her fair forehead, "under the care of my mother, until this war is over; and I do not think it will be of long duration."

"But my father, Howell, will not perhaps give his consent to what you propose," said Florence, looking up in his face mournfully.

"He will, dear Florence, he will; I have not the least doubt of it. I do not wish to wound your feelings, love; but it appears to me as if you were a sort of a clog, that prevented your father from at once joining the British. Loving you so tenderly, he cannot bear to part from you; while, at the same time, his attachment to the English prompts him to join them. But, after Sir Isaac Brock's defeat, which I look upon as certain—for I cannot think Hull will render his name infamous—he will the more readily agree to what I propose, and will then, no doubt, procure a passage for himself in one of their vessels for England—for he has no thought of becoming a soldier, I believe—the only place he will be in security, with his sentiments, until peace is concluded."

Florence tried to believe her lover that all would end well; that there was no danger Lazy O'Lear would have it in his power to implicate her father in any plot; and his assurances that, when he returned to Detroit, he would have him strictly watched, seemed to calm her mind. But poor Florence had not told *all* the annoyance—persecution would be the better word—she daily suffered from her parent, to gain her consent to cross the Niagara with him to Queenstown, where Sir Edgar Lee, who had procured the commission of colonel in the English army, was now stationed; nor that he had written several letters to her, which she had only taken from her father's hand, that she might be certain they were destroyed, as they would furnish evidence that he held correspondence with the enemy; thinking, if there did *exist* any that were more treasonable, his prudence would cause him to leave no proof of it; but that Lazy O'Lear was the agent employed she felt certain. All this she could not bear to tell Howell, as she knew it would distress him. He had heard of her rejection of Sir Edgar's suit, but had no thought of his again renewing it, or that her father still favored it. She knew she could depend on her own firmness and decision in refusing to cross the American border, as well as in refusing the English nobleman, and she thought it best not to mention the subject. Nor did she tell him that, on Henry's last visit to the Hill, her father had tried to bribe him with a captaincy in his majesty's army, and his consent to his immediate marriage with the beautiful Miss Aylmer, to whom he was engaged, "if he would but take part with the country of his ancestors," as he was pleased to term it. Her brother had indignantly refused, and the colonel's anger seemed still greatly excited against him. Florence locked all this in her own bosom, or only talked it over with Mary, who was almost as indignant as Henry at the proposal.

"But, dear Howell, you have had no refreshment," said Florence, driving those thoughts from her mind, and observing he looked fatigued. She rang the bell. It was answered by Mrs. Jones herself, who said, as she entered—

"I have had supper prepared in the dining-room, Miss Florence. I thought it likely that Master—Captain Meredith, I mean—had not supped."

"Thank you," replied Florence; "that was kind and thoughtful."

And, taking Howell's arm, they proceeded to the dining-room, where they found the good house-

keeper had some excellent coffee and hot cakes prepared, with a variety of preserves. As it was her "preserving week," she said, "she hoped the captain would take some of each kind. She was sure he would, if he only loved them as well as he did when she got first acquainted with him." Howell laughed, and promised to do his best. The birds so nicely cooked, which she pressed him to eat, "were shot that afternoon by Minesto."

"Minesto!" said Howell. "I had almost forgotten him. How is the poor fellow? Does he still continue to live here and at Arcadia, alternately, as I understood he had done while I was in Europe?"

"He does," answered Florence. "But of late he is much with us. It is very singular," she continued, "but there appears to have taken place an almost total change in his nature; for it seems he has but once visited his tribe since we found him in the wood. He is often in Lewistown, where he sometimes takes fish and game to dispose of, when he has taken more than we can make use of. He still retains his attachment to you, and frequently inquires after the 'young chief, his good white brother.' He has been in town all day, I believe; has he not, Mrs. Jones?"

"Yes, Miss Florence, and the most part of yesterday."

"I shall probably see him, then," said Howell, "when I go back to the camp."

And he and Florence returned to the drawing-room, when, observing that the clock was pointing to eleven, he prepared to depart, after again trying to cheer her with the hope of his speedy return; and, pressing her warmly to his heart, he was soon on his way to the boat, where he had left Gotlieb. As he approached, he perceived another figure standing on the shore talking with him. It was Minesto, who, when he saw Howell, came forward, saying—

"Minesto is glad to see his white brother. The young chief is well; he walks straight, and does not see the snake trail in the grass. Minesto sees."

"I am glad to see my brother," replied Howell. "The Great Spirit has not given the white man eyes like the red, to see the serpent's trail; but he has given him courage and strength to kill a traitor." For Howell had pondered on all he had heard from Florence of Lazy O'Lear, and had rightly guessed the Indian alluded to him.

"Yes, pale-faced traitor and robber has gone before the young chief to Detroit," said Minesto, and his dark eyes seemed to flash fire as he proudly drew himself up, adding, "The hatchet of a brave drinks the blood of an enemy as the papoose does his mother's milk." He turned to go, saying, "Minesto will see his white brother again;" and, walking slowly towards Sefton Hill, was soon out of sight.

CHAPTER V.

And now, as we have said so much of Mr. Lazy O'Lear, it is time we give the reader a history of that personage. Notwithstanding his singular cognomen, Lazy was descended from royalty itself. His grandfather, a king of the gipsies, had, years before, emigrated from Bohemia to England, bringing most of his subjects with him; for he was a king whose subjects, unlike the subjects of other monarchs, generally followed wherever he went. His majesty was fond of a sylvan retreat, particularly in summer time, and had chosen a wood in Devonshire, near a village, where he and his people took up their quarters, and where the father of our hero was born. The king himself frequently visited the village; being gifted, it was said, with an insight into futurity, he was anxious to communicate his knowledge to others, and would deign to accept the smallest coin merely as a token from those he so favored of their belief in his prescience. His majesty had, unfortunately, it would seem, left his wardrobe behind in Bohemia, by what accident I could never learn; for he could not have been forced to abdicate and fly, as did Louis Philippe, for *his* subjects remained faithful and accompanied him; but so it was, and his royal garments frequently fluttered gracefully in the wind, which caused some mischievous wag, who did not regard majesty as he should—for a king is a king, whether in rags or purple—to give him the name of "Old Lear." The boys in the village, knowing little of Shakspeare, and thinking that even a king should have a Mr. before his name, converted it into Mr. O'Lear; and when his hopeful son and heir was big enough to mix with them, as he sometimes did, he was called Billy O'Lear. The king and his subjects frequently made excursions round the country, and would sometimes be away a year or two; but they seldom stayed longer from the wood in Devonshire.

Billy O'Lear led this sort of life until he was about fifteen years of age, when, having stolen a hen from a neighboring hen-roost, cooked and eaten it, without his royal father's knowledge, his majesty had inflicted severe punishment on him when it was discovered, and Billy absconded, and, meeting with a traveling tinker, engaged himself to him. He remained with the tinker several years; when, thinking the western hemisphere might be benefited by his services, he crossed the Atlantic and traveled westward, through the State of New York, scarcely leaving a leaky pan or kettle behind him in his progress. Finding his business so prosperous, Billy began to think of taking a traveling companion in the shape of a wife; and a stout, lively girl, who lived at a farmer's where he had sometimes lodged, expressing a great desire to travel, Billy made his proposals, was accepted, and Sally Hines became Sally O'Lear. But Sally soon found traveling very fatig-

uing, and persuaded her lord and master it would be much more comfortable and economical to go to housekeeping; so they rented a small log-house some few miles from Lewistown, and, while Billy was pursuing his avocation abroad, his better half, who was both active and industrious, by taking in washing and helping the farmers at haymaking and harvest times, soon was able to procure many comforts and conveniences for their humble home. But, unfortunately, a year or two after the birth of our hero, who was also called Billy, after his father, the elder Billy began to frequent an ale-house in the neighborhood, and to acquire the habit of sleeping away much of his time, and of lounging about at home. In vain poor Sally would say to him—

"Now don't be lazy, Bill. Just take your tools and sawdering-pan, and I warrant you 'll git pots and kittles enough to mend. There 's no good comes of being lazy."

"I ain't lazy, wife," her gentle spouse would respond; "but I must give them time to melt the old sawderin' off before I goes round agin. I puts it on thin enough, I 'se sure. But you 're always talkin' about bein' *lazy*. I wonders as how you don't call that little feller there lazy," pointing to Billy the junior, who was springing about much like a little hoptoad. "Come here, Bill." And, with a single leap, the urchin was on his knee. "Now I want you to bring daddy's hat to him," throwing his old castor some rods from him. The youngster would, at one bound, recover his father's hat, and, at a second, be again perched on his knee. "Well, now, that 's *lazy;* ain't it, Sal? You 're *lazy*, too, I s'pose, as well as daddy," hugging up his youthful son, in whom, as he grew older, the father took great pleasure, showing the activity of the boy to his mother, by calling to him, "Run and shut the gate, '*Lazy*,' the cows are coming in from the road;" or, "Run and feed the pig, Lazy, it ain't had nothin' to eat to-day." And, when our hero would fly like a squirrel to show how active and smart he was, Billy would turn to his wife, observing, "He 's *lazy*, ain't he? Yes, yes, he 's Lazy O'Lear."

And "Lazy O'Lear" was so often repeated at home, that, when its possessor was sent a quarter to the free school at Lewistown to learn to spell and read—for his poor mother worked hard to spare him—he went by no other name. She herself found it a more convenient name than Billy, as that was her husband's name. It is true, she at first made a distinction by calling him "Bill," and her son "Billy;" but, as every one else called him Lazy, she, too, almost unconsciously, fell into the habit, and thus he acquired so expressive a name.

As Lazy grew up, his father's habits of industry and temperance did not improve, so he undertook his business; and for miles round, on both sides of the border, Lazy O'Lear was well known, and he had as much, indeed more work than he could attend to. About this time, his father died from the effect of intemperance; and poor Sally, having caught the small-pox, lived only a week after him. Lazy, being thus left alone, disposed of such little property as his parents possessed, and, for some time, continued his business traveling round the country; until, at length, he found himself able to rent a small shop in Lewistown, where he bought old iron and sold second-hand locks, keys, bells, kettles, pots, pans, &c., and, by his habits of industry and perseverance, in a few years found himself in rather a prosperous condition, as he was now able to keep a small hardware store. But Lazy O'Lear's early habits had not tended to improve his character; he thought it no crime to deceive, cheat, and overreach, so that it was not *discovered*, and he could preserve the semblance of honesty. He had the shrewdness to see that sincerity, probity, and good moral and religious principles were esteemed even by those who lacked those qualities themselves; he therefore affected them, and, to hear Lazy O'Lear speak of religious and moral duties, you would perhaps take him for what he was not—a *good man*. It is true, he frequently went too far, and would cause you to think that, though he "strained at a gnat, he could swallow a camel." He was fawning and servile wherever he found rank, wealth, or power, and assuming, arrogant, and impertinent, as upstarts usually are, where he thought he dared be so with impunity. Money was his idol, and, next to that, there was nothing he so much coveted as a public office that would lead him to distinction, for Lazy, like Cæsar, was ambitious; but he mistook low cunning and art for intellect and talent, which he imagined he possessed in a high degree. He had been made one of the overseers of the county poor-house, which he thought was one step gained in bringing him before the public.

A short time before the commencement of our tale, a Captain Henry, of the United States army, arrived in Lewistown, and took up his lodgings in the best hotel. He was gentlemanly and courteous in manner, and had brought letters of introduction from Sir James Craig, Governor of Canada, to Colonel Sefton and one or two more gentlemen near the town, who seemed to approve of all the proceedings of Great Britain. A dinner had been given, at Sefton Hill, to him, at which some toasts had been proposed which Mr. Meredith, who was one of the guests, indignantly refused to drink, and expressed his surprise at the temerity of those who proposed them. But Colonel Sefton, who was possessed of considerable tact, and who was ably seconded by the captain, succeeded in making his noble and truthful-minded friend believe they had been offered in jest; but, as those who were of the opposite party, and who felt, as freemen should, the insults heaped on their country, began to look on Captain Henry with suspicion, he did not again visit the Hill.

In his perambulations through the town, which were frequent, he had met with Lazy O'Lear, and

soon found he would be a fit tool for his purpose; and, on the morning of the pic-nic, had sent that worthy to apprise the colonel that he wished a private interview with him that night. He had left his hotel that morning, and was taken, with his baggage, over to Queenstown. For fear of attracting observation, Lazy O'Lear was to bring a boat over for him in the evening, and, after his conference with the colonel was over, was to row him back again. We have already spoken of that interview; but we have not told the reader that, when the gallant captain returned to the governor, upon opening his portmanteau to deliver his letters, he found in their place two or three soiled handkerchiefs. On whom to rest his suspicions he did not know. Lazy O'Lear rose to his mind; but he had traveled far after parting with him, and had met with many other persons, and stopped at several places, so, as there was nothing ever heard of those letters, the governor and he both thought it advisable to let the matter rest.

Upon the declaration of war with England, Lazy O'Lear had been among the most clamorous of the peace party; but, when General Van Rensselaer's army had taken up their quarters at Lewistown, he had changed his politics, but not suddenly. He was always seeking to argue with the other party, and would appear as if their arguments were so convincing that he could not withstand them, and eventually *was convinced* of the necessity of a war. He now became a great patriot, sold out his stock in trade of kettles and pans to a particular friend of his, called Ashman, or Red Ashman—a sobriquet the good people of Lewistown gave him, as his hair was red. His whiskers, which he wore large, were red; his face was red; his hands were red; the only shades of white visible in his person were his eyelashes; but I should not say they were visible, for he tried as much as possible to hide them under a pair of spectacles, which, as he could not see *through*, he was obliged to try and look *over*, which caused him to walk with his head much in the van of his person. After the disposal of his goods, Lazy obtained the rank of a sergeant in the militia. "Sergeant Lazy O'Lear," it was certainly not a very high rank; but, as he observed to his friends, he was only ambitious to do his country service, and he thought he might do as much in his humble grade as if he were a general. But it was rather singular that, though he had deserted from Colonel Sefton's party, he still appeared on good terms with that gentleman; but he never was seen going to Sefton Hill in daytime. He had been made the bearer of dispatches several times to General Hull, when Van Rensselaer received them from headquarters, with orders to forward them; and, on each occasion, was detained by Hull to go on some secret mission, in which it was more than insinuated to the officers that he was employed by Hull as a sort of spy on the British, and that there was no one so well calculated for it as himself, having such a correct knowledge of the country.

CHAPTER VI.

The morning after Howell's visit to Florence, he set out on his return to Fort Detroit. Lieutenant Sefton had not yet arrived.

It was a bright, lovely day, when Florence and Miss Aylmer, with Nestor, who now belonged to the former, and a servant, took their way to Arcadia. Florence had promised Howell she would finish a beautiful view she had commenced taking from a window in Mrs. Meredith's room. She had mentioned their intention to her father at breakfast, and he did not object, only advising them to take a servant with them, as, in the present state of the country, it would not be prudent to go unattended. He listened apparently without displeasure to Florence's account of Howell's arrival and departure; for he had sent her a short note, on leaving, by Thornton, who had, on hearing of his being in Lewistown, gone there to see his young master. The colonel merely observed "he was glad Captain Meredith was well, and that she was a good girl not to have disturbed him, as he was very busily engaged at that time." He then kissed the young ladies, wishing them a pleasant day, and telling them not to let it be late in the evening when they returned, as they intended to spend the day. He went to the stables to look at his horses, and see how they were attended to. He had not been engaged long, when a servant came to tell him there were two gentlemen who wished to see him: "they had not sent their names." He returned to the house, and entered the drawing-room, bowing slightly as he advanced, and closing the door after him. One of the officers approached, and, laying his hand on his shoulder, said—

"Gerald Sefton, I arrest you, in the name of the commonwealth, for high treason!"

Colonel Sefton started back.

"What mean you, sir," he said, "by this mockery? Of what treason am I accused?"

"I do not wish to use violence, sir," replied the officer; "but I arrest you by the order of General Van Rensselaer, and am ordered, likewise, to conduct you to the fort. I hope you will go with us peaceably. We are also commissioned to examine your papers."

The unfortunate man turned white and red alternately, while Captain Morton spoke. After a pause, he replied, with a sarcastic smile—

"I suppose resistance to such high authority were worse than useless. I will conduct you to the library, gentlemen, where you can examine my papers. In the mean time, there is a favor I would ask: it is that my domestics may observe nothing in your manner which may lead them to suppose I

am arrested, as I do not wish my child's peace of mind to be disturbed this night."

"We will certainly do anything in our power to avoid giving Miss Sefton pain," they replied.

Colonel Sefton led the way to the library. After remaining there for some time, they descended together; and, as they were passing through the hall, the colonel called a servant and said—

"When Miss Florence and Miss Aylmer return, tell them not to be the least uneasy, should I not be home to-night." He then stepped into the carriage with the officers, and it immediately drove off.

It was late that afternoon when the young ladies returned from the valley; the night set in dark and rainy. The colonel's message had been delivered; and, after tea, they had retired to Florence's room, where Mary occupied herself with her embroidery, while her cousin read aloud from a work in which they were both much interested. They had not been engaged long, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and Martha—an orphan girl of about sixteen, whom Florence had persuaded Mrs. Jones to engage as her deputy-assistant in the art of housekeeping—entered.

"Oh, Miss Florence!" she exclaimed, "Thornton has just come up from Lewistown, and says as how that Colonel Sefton has been *'rested* for *bein'* an Englishman, and is a goin' to be shot dead tomorrow!"

Florence heard no more, but fell back fainting. Mary sprung to her assistance.

"Oh, laws a massy, what shall I do?" cried Martha. "I have frightened her to death! Oh, what shall I do, Miss Mary?"

"Hand me a glass of water quickly, and pull the bell-cord," said Miss Aylmer.

In a few minutes, Alice, Miss Sefton's maid, made her appearance. She was a kind-hearted, affectionate English girl, who loved Florence dearly.

"She revives," said Mary, after the usual restoratives had been applied.

Florence gazed wildly round, as if she had awaked from some painful dream. "It is, indeed, reality!" said she, throwing her arms round her cousin's neck; and, resting her head on her bosom, she wept and sobbed violently.

"Dear, dear Florence!" said Mary, pressing her closely to her, "do not grieve so; it may be a false report."

"Oh, laws a massy! Oh, don't cry so dreadfully, Miss Florence!" repeated Martha. "I guess as how it 's only a story, after all. Oh, what shall I do?—what shall I do?"

Alice whispered to her the best thing she could do would be to go down stairs until Miss Sefton was more composed, which advice she took.

After the violence of her emotion had somewhat subsided, Florence rose, saying, "Dearest Mary, I must be alone. I will soon return to you." Entering an adjoining chamber, she threw herself on her knees and prayed fervently to that Being who never forsakes those who put their trust in Him. She felt her courage and strength of mind return after her prayer, and that she had a friend who was "mighty and able to save." She sat considering for a few minutes, and then returned to her room.

"Dear Mary, this is what I have feared and dreamed of," she said. "But this is no time for me to give way to vain grief, when I am called upon to act. I am going down to the fort to plead for my father's life; and, should I not succeed in that, to try and liberate him by other means."

"I will accompany you," said Miss Aylmer.

"No, dearest, no!" replied Florence; "you could do no good. All you can do is to pray for me. I will only take Alice with me. Alice, you are willing to assist me?"

"My dear young lady, I will try to do it with my life," she replied; "and I think I have courage to help you in any plan you judge best."

"I thought so, Alice. I felt I could put confidence in you. Now tell Thornton I wish to see him."

Thornton's story was the same in substance as that which Martha had repeated. Florence desired Alice "to go to her father's wardrobe and bring her a suit of his clothes, with the case of pistols which were on a shelf in the upper part of it." These she had put in a basket, with two bottles of wine and some crackers.

"Now listen to me, Thornton," she said. "I think you would run some little risk to serve me?"

"Oh yes, Miss Florence," replied the good-hearted black; "I will do anyting in de world for you, and to git Colonel Seffim free. Minesto, too, he tell me I mus' say to you he help too."

"Is Minesto here?" said Florence, her hopes brightening.

"Yes, Miss Florence, he here."

"Well, then, Thornton, pay particular attention to what I say. First, go down to Caleb, and tell him to have the carriage ready as soon as possible; then go to the boat—take Minesto with you, and do not let any one know what you are about—muffle the oars, and leave the Indian in her. Return here for this basket, which you will convey as privately as you can, and put on board; then row down to that cluster of trees that are on the bank, about a half mile from here. Now do you understand me perfectly, Thornton?" continued Florence.

"Yes, yes, Miss Florence, I understands. It is where Massa Howell put his boat last time he come to Seffim Hill. I knows."

"You are right. Remain there until you hear from me. And now go quickly, Thornton."

"Yes, miss, I do jis as you say," replied he, hastening to execute his orders.

There was one advantage Colonel Sefton possessed: it was the love of his servants. There was

scarcely a member of his household that could be bribed to betray him. He was a kind master. Caleb, his coachman, had lived with him for years, and Florence well knew she could trust him.

After making some alteration in her dress, and putting on a bonnet that nearly hid her face, she threw a large cloak round her person, and kissed poor Mary, saying, "Do not weep; God will help us!" then telling Mrs. Jones to be careful of her, she entered the carriage with Alice, and was soon on her way to the fort. It rained fast, and the night was dark; but for this she felt grateful, as she thought it might perhaps favor her purpose. Her heart beat violently, and, though she appeared calm and collected outwardly, a thousand fears agitated her. She had told Alice her plan, and the part she was to take in it; yet her chief hope lay in the clemency of General Van Rensselaer, who, she thought, could not have the cruelty to have her father executed, even were he proved guilty of treason, as the plot—if he was concerned in one—must have been discovered before any mischief could have been effected. But Florence reasoned as a woman. She struggled hard to retain her self-possession when the carriage stopped at the fort. Caleb dismounted, and informed the sentinel that a "lady wished to see the general." After a little delay, an officer appeared, who conducted her and Alice to a small apartment, which seemed a sort of antechamber, and was very plainly furnished. A few moments elapsed, when he again appeared, saying that "General Van Rensselaer would see the lady;" and, opening the door that led to the next apartment, ushered Florence in.

The general was seated at a table covered with books and papers, but rose as she entered and bowed. Too much agitated to speak, she threw back her bonnet from her face, when he exclaimed, "Miss Sefton!" and, taking both her hands, led her to a chair.

"I am sorry I cannot say that I am glad to see you, my dear young lady," he continued.

"General Van Rensselaer, my father!—why has my father been arrested?"

"Believe me, Miss Sefton, your father was not arrested until the proofs of his treason were too glaring to be longer passed over. His papers and intercepted letters show that he has been holding a treasonable correspondence with the enemy. Indeed, on his trial, he scarcely denied it."

"His trial!" ejaculated Florence. "Has he then been already tried?"

"There was every proof of his treason before his arrest; and he was tried this morning by a court martial. But, my dear"——

"And his sentence!" cried Florence, springing to her feet and interrupting him — "his sentence, General Van Rensselaer! You have not sentenced my father to death? Oh!" cried she, throwing herself passionately at his feet, as he did not answer—"oh, do not tell me he is sentenced to die! You would not, you could not be so cruel!"

"Rise, Miss Sefton, I cannot permit this. Rise; you must not remain in that posture," said the general, much affected.

"No! no! I will not leave your feet until you tell me my father shall live!" she replied.

"But, my dear child"——

"Yes, your dear child!" cried Florence, seizing the word. "Only think, if I was your child, pleading to another for your life, how you would wish her petition should be answered!"

"But I cannot listen to anything while you remain kneeling," said he.

"Then *you will* listen to me?" she said, rising and standing before him with clasped hands; her bonnet had been thrown back on her shoulders, and the thick glossy tresses of her brown hair escaping from their confinement hung round her like a veil. "You *will hear* me; I knew you would! I felt that you would be too merciful, too humane to deprive a daughter of her only parent."

"Would to Heaven it were in my power to bid your father live!" said he.

"Not in your power! Oh, do not say so! do not say so! General Van Rensselaer, think there will a day come when you, too, will plead for mercy before Him who has said, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.' *Then* you will view things in a different light; *then* the recollection of this one act of mercy will shed sweet peace on your dying moments."

"My God, this is dreadful!" said he. "Listen to me, Miss Sefton; listen to me, my dear young lady. It would be almost as impossible for me to save your father's life as it would be, were he already dead, to restore him to life again. I cannot save him!"

Florence felt her senses reel, caught by the chair, and sank into it. The general opened the door, called Alice, and rushed from the room. Meeting an officer as he hurried along, he said to him—

"Captain Bolton, you will see that that poor girl has an interview with her father. She will doubtless request it. Let it be brief for both their sakes, not exceeding twenty minutes; but let it be also private. Poor child! poor child! I would not go through such another scene for the wealth of Peru."

Captain Bolton remained some time in the outer room, when Alice appeared at the door and said, "Miss Sefton desired to know if she would be permitted to see her father?"

"Certainly," he replied. "I am waiting to conduct her to him."

In a few moments, Florence came out, calm, but deathly pale, leaning on the arm of Alice. The officer stepped forward, offering his arm, which she declined with a bow, motioning him to proceed. He led them through several passages, until they entered one in which a sentry was pacing up and

down before a door barred and bolted, at which he stopped. The bolts were removed, and Florence entered, and it was again secured. The captain opened a door nearly opposite, telling Alice "she could remain there until Miss Sefton wanted her."

Twenty minutes elapsed, and a knock at the door told her that her services were required. She rapidly crossed the entry, and, as Florence came near tottering, as if greatly convulsed with grief, she pressed before the officer, and throwing her arm round her, as if to support her, effectually prevented him from aiding the lady. Colonel Sefton was seated with his arms resting on his knees, his face covered with his hands, and his hat drawn over his eyes. He looked the picture of despondency. Captain Bolton showed the way to the carriage. He would again have offered his services in assisting Florence into it; but Caleb, the moment his young lady appeared, took her by the arm, and he and Alice lifted her in; then, mounting his seat, he took the road to Sefton Hill.

CHAPTER VII.

On the night previous to the one on which Lazy O'Lear left Lewistown with dispatches for Detroit, he was sentinel, the only one on the Niagara *below* Lewistown. In the early part of the night, he had gone up to Sefton Hill, where he held a long conference with the colonel, having procured his friend —Ashman, or Red Ashman, whom we have already mentioned—to take his place. He informed Colonel Sefton of his intended departure, and that he was going the next day, observing that, if he wished to write to Sir Edgar Lee, this would probably be the only opportunity he might have, before some engagement would take place between the Americans and English. It was not likely, he said, that he should return to Queenstown until after the surrender of Michigan to the British; adding—

"I have succeeded so well in frightening old Hull with the terrible threats of Sir Isaac Brock to let loose his savages on the whole garrison at Detroit, and to have his scalp carried on a pole at the head of the English army, that the old coward would creep into an egg-shell if he could. All that General Brock has to do is to come and take possession. Your countrymen, colonel, owe me a deep debt of gratitude."

"Which they will no doubt repay," replied he; "and I will detain you no longer than to write a few lines to Sir Edgar. I expected a communication from him to-night. Did you not bring any?"

"None. You forget, sir, that it is yet too early for the boat to come over."

"Very true; I had forgotten. Well, let the letters, when they come, remain in the cavity; I will get them safely in the morning."

Colonel Sefton wrote his letter, and gave it to Lazy O'Lear, who returned to his post and relieved his friend. A short time before midnight, a boat on the British side of the water appeared slowly floating along, when O'Lear immediately began going through his military exercise. The boat then came swiftly over, propelled by a pair of muffled oars, and glided noiselessly into a nook in the river, overshadowed by a clump of large trees, whose branches nearly touched the water. Its occupant stepped on shore, and, stooping down, deposited a package of letters in a cavity at the root of one of the trees, taking out the letter from Colonel Sefton, which Lazy had placed there, then re-entered his boat, which, like a fairy bark, in a few moments was out of sight.

This was the mode of communication between the English nobleman and Colonel Sefton. Lazy O'Lear contrived to let the latter know on what nights he would be sentinel. Every night the boat would appear on the British side of the stream, but only when Lazy O'Lear commenced his exercises did it venture to cross, as this was the signal that it would be safe. This could not have occurred had there been another sentinel on that side—the south side—of the town, between Lewistown and the Falls; but it was thought that one was sufficient there, as, about half way between Queenstown and the Falls, the whirlpool is situated, and the Niagara is here pent up within a narrow channel not over a hundred yards in width, so that few boats would venture to cross near it, and, of course, there was little danger of an enemy from that side.

Upon the disappearance of the boat, Lazy O'Lear possessed himself of the package of letters; and, when he was relieved by another sentinel, repaired immediately to General Van Rensselaer, and, giving him the packet, stated that he had accidentally discovered it in the cavity of the tree. The general recommended secrecy to the traitor, which was needless, and he left for Detroit. That there existed traitors in the fort, the American General felt certain; but as Lee, in his letter, had spoken of O'Lear as our trusty friend, "our messenger," &c., as had been insisted on by that worthy as one of the conditions on which he would serve his employers, he was not suspected. Sir Edgar also spoke of the surrender of Hull's army as certain; though he did not state explicitly that General Hull held any treasonable correspondence with General Brock, but as if he thought him a coward. He dwelt chiefly on what was uppermost in his thoughts, that the colonel should either persuade, or, if necessary, compel Florence to accompany them to England, and the means to effect this. But in the packet was a letter from Sir Isaac Brock himself, thanking Colonel Sefton for the valuable information he had given him of the best means of succeeding in taking Lewistown, of the number of men in garrison, &c. &c. This was decided proof of his treason.

Van Rensselaer would have had him arrested at once, had not Sir Edgar Lee stated in his letter that it would be most prudent now to discontinue their correspondence until General Brock advanced to Lewistown; and, as he was very desirous of discovering who were leagued with the colonel, he thought it best to leave him at large, having him closely watched, and all that he associated with. He had immediately, on discovering the treason, written to General Dearborn an account of the whole affair, one which greatly agitated him, as he both loved and esteemed Henry Sefton highly, and had, but a few days previous to the discovery, sent him on to Sackett's Harbor with dispatches; and, when Howell arrived, was hourly expecting his return. He knew of Captain Meredith's attachment to Florence, and resolved not to inform him of the matter, but to permit him to return to Detroit without waiting for Henry's return, sending General Hull word that, when news from headquarters arrived, he would transmit it to him by Lieutenant Sefton; thus securing the absence of both young men during what he knew must take place, the trial and execution of Colonel Sefton. Poor Henry! this would be a dreadful blow to him, and the kind general felt much sympathy for the young soldier, of whose loyalty it was impossible to doubt; indeed, no one who looked upon his frank, open countenance, the high, broad brow, the deep blue eye sparkling with intelligence and depth of feeling, with his noble, though slender figure, could harbor the doubt that truth and sincerity had there a dwelling-place. Henry was more free and communicative in his disposition, being younger, and having seen less of the world than Howell. Truthful and noble-minded himself, he had not learned, what a knowledge of the world so soon teaches, to distrust; and this blow would, the general feared, have a stunning effect.

The messenger sent with an account of Colonel Sefton's treason to General Dearborn now arrived with his answer, and still Henry did not make his appearance. But, the very day of his father's trial, just after Florence's painful interview with Van Rensselaer, a countryman came, bringing the dispatches he had expected by Henry, who stated that the lieutenant had been thrown from his horse about half way between Lewistown and Sackett's Harbor, was badly bruised, and had an arm broken; he was now lying at his house unable to move, and had engaged him to bring the letters on to the fort. The general almost uttered a prayer of thankfulness at the accident, which had saved him from the agonizing knowledge of what was to take place.

General Dearborn, in answer to Van Rensselaer, ordered Colonel Sefton to be immediately arrested and tried by a court martial, and, if found guilty, shot; adding that he felt deeply for Lieutenant Sefton, who had, only the morning that he had received the news of his father's treason, left for Lewistown, and that it was solely in consideration of *his* worth and patriotism that he was to be *shot, instead of being hanged,* as he richly deserved, as the letters proved him to be a spy as well as traitor.

He was, accordingly, as we have seen, brought down to the fort. The court was already formed. It consisted of General Van Rensselaer and the principal officers of the regiment. His papers which had been seized, fully proved his guilt. In a copy of a letter addressed to General Brock, he informed him, after the English had possession of Michigan, and, as a matter of course, after the surrender of Lewistown, his intention was to visit England, taking both Florence and Mary with him, as he felt sure such a measure would have the effect of causing Henry to follow, and "Florence, he hoped, to forget her Yankee lover," as he chose to call Captain Meredith.

After the letters had been read before the court, the colonel, who had scarcely spoken a word, requested if he might be informed who had discovered the package. When told it was Lazy O'Lear, "Double-dyed traitor!" he exclaimed, with vehemence; and he then informed the court that O'Lear was the agent employed; but it was too late, he had already escaped. The result of the trial is already known. He was sentenced to be shot, between the hours of eleven and twelve o'clock, the day following.

Colonel Sefton felt assured that revenge was the motive that prompted Lazy O'Lear to betray him. Some months previous, when the colonel first opened a treasonable correspondence with the English through his means, he had the presumption to ask for an introduction to Miss Aylmer, and permission from him, as her guardian, to pay his addresses to that lady. Indignation too strong for words, at the proposal, at first filled the breast of her proud uncle. Mary, the niece of his departed and still loved Isabel, the lovely, the gifted, wealthy Mary Aylmer, one that even he, with all his pride, was delighted to think of as the future bride of Henry, and whom he would rather call his daughter than any princess in existence; that such a creature as Lazy O'Lear —his tool, whom, though he employed, he despised from his heart—a fawning sycophant, without wealth, education, or any qualities mental or personal, to recommend him—should have the presumption to aspire to *her* hand! It was too much; and, after the first shock—if I may use the expression—of astonishment was over, he poured upon the unfortunate sergeant such a torrent of contempt and invective as roused all the fierce hate and malice of his nature.

"Colonel Sefton," he said, his little black eyes glaring like two coals of fire, "I will bear this no longer! I have you in my power, sir! Do you remember the letters you gave to Captain Henry?*

* It is known to most American readers that Captain John Henry, of the United States army, and afterwards of

There they are!" said he, taking a packet from his coat pocket; "and there is *that in them* that will hang you as high as Haman! Either a promise in writing of Miss Aylmer's hand, or the American government shall know that Captain Henry made at least *one* traitor. You have your choice!"

The colonel was seated at a table, with a drawer partly opened before him. He sat composedly looking at Lazy O'Lear while he spoke. "You have your choice!" repeated he, looking down exultingly on the packet. In the twinkling of an eye, the colonel's hand, thrown like a dart across the table, had seized the letters, and almost as quickly they were in the fire. At the same moment, drawing a pistol from the drawer of the table, he said—

"So you were the robber and traitor that extracted the letters from Captain Henry's portmanteau; and, bold thief as you are, you have dared to acknowledge it! Do not stir," he continued; "for, if you do, I fire!" holding up the pistol at the same time.

"Oh, do not kill me, Colonel Sefton!" said he; for he had been taken so by surprise, that he had stood perfectly motionless during the transaction. "Do not kill me; I will not betray you."

"No, you will not betray me," replied the colonel, with a scornful laugh, "because you have not the power. But, suppose *I* let the 'American government know' that you have brought me *this letter from General Brock*"—the first he had received; "who then will hang as high as Haman?"

"I only said so to try"——said Lazy O'Lear.

"To try," interrupted the colonel, "if you could frighten me." Then, after a pause, he added, "Come, let us understand each other. Your object is *money;* as for Miss Aylmer, never let me hear her name pass your lips. I may perhaps have said some hard things to you; but let them pass. As I said, you want money; I need your services, and will reward you liberally; but any attempt at betraying what is intrusted to you, and your life will pay the forfeit, though I die the moment after. Do you understand?"

"I do. Money is certainly my object; as for the girl"——

"Silence!" said Colonel Sefton. "Do not dare touch again on that subject."

"I would only say," he replied, "that gold is better than love; and that the lady's money was her principal charm with me."

The colonel's eyes flashed fire at this audacious answer—though it was said in a sort of deprecating tone, as if it were the want of money alone that caused his presumption; but Sefton restrained himself, however, as he thought that, to carry out his plans, Lazy O'Lear's services were indispensable; besides, he felt perfectly sure that he could not betray him without implicating himself, so he merely replied—

"Well, well, I have promised you money, if you are faithful; and you have reason to know that I am not niggardly."

How faithful he proved has been shown to the reader.

(To be concluded.)

Canada, was employed by Sir James Craig, the Governor of Canada, to raise a party in the New England States of those opposed to the restrictions laid on commerce by the American government, from which they were to separate, and to form a political alliance with Great Britain. But he did not succeed.

POETRY.

SPRING ON THE PRAIRIES.

BY R. C. BIERCE.

How softly breaks the light of dew-gemm'd morn
Upon this wide-spread plain of living green,
So beautifully fringed with blossoming thorn,
And wavy with the shade of dark ravine!
There, sparkling in the early light, are seen
The rainbow's hues reflected from the flowers,
Half hidden by their deep and leafy screen,
All glist'ning with the drops of pearly showers,
That softly fade in tears upon Night's silent hours.

How sweetly, clearly, on the ear now falls
The gushing music of the wild bird's song,
Whose deepest harmony no worldly care inthralls;
Oh! lightsome, gladsome swell his notes along,
Poured from a bosom that ne'er suffered wrong;
Gay as the sunshine of this bursting Spring
Are the tuneful warblers of this woody throng,
Whose cheery notes o'er wild and prairie ring,
Light as the plumes that rest upon the shining wing.

The south wind, flitting o'er the wavy grass,
Bears the fresh fragrance of the flowering dell,
Blent with the shadows of light clouds that pass,
In darkened images, o'er each slope and swell,
Kissing the bright beauty of the wild harebell,
Yet leaves no footprint of its steps so light
On the green turf, or where the cool springs well
Their bubbling waters in a fountain bright,
That lulls the ear by day and sings in dreams of night

And this is in the Spring, the glorious Spring,
When life is mantling on all things we see,
And breathing Nature, on triumphant wing,
Soars upward, buoyant with vitality;
The heart *will* lighten, though sad Destiny
Press on its pulse with an unbroken chain,
And seek to bind us to the budding earth! We
May break away, nor heed the mortal pain,
For spring within the heart *should* hold eternal reign!

Most glorious Spring! that lifts from earth the shroud
Which chilled the beating of her bloodless breast,